Annual School Report
2011 School Year

Mt St Patrick Primary School

Murwillumbah
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P.O. Box 1226

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02 6672 1536
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About this report

Mt St Patrick Primary School is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Education Office (CEO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Education Office. This Report has been approved by the CEO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2012 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report are able to be discussed at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6672 1821 or by visiting the website at www.murplism.catholic.edu.au
Principal’s Message

The primary purpose of Mt St Patrick Catholic Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. Mt St Patrick Primary offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2011. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that Mt St Patrick Primary has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- The school’s NAPLAN results were all above the national average.
- “Mathletics” was introduced into the school and the students received outstanding results throughout the year.
- Enrichment Maths classes operate within the school – Year 3 through to Year 6.
- The school was highly successful at the Tweed Valley Eisteddfod and the Tweed Public Speaking competition.
- The school, in conjunction with Southern Cross University, introduced a comprehensive and student-centred Pre-School to Kindergarten Transition program.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- The school once again participated in the Annual Banana Festival by having students parade under the theme Primary School Musical.
- Mt St Patrick Primary has a very proud and long tradition of participating in the ANZAC Day march.
- Students participated in NAIDOC week activities.
- All classes performed in the choir section of the Murwillumbah Performing Arts Festival. Individual students also entered speech, drama and music sections of the festival.
- Mt St Patrick Primary has a long association with the Murwillumbah Show with classes participating in the schools’ display section as well as students entering individual competitions in art, cooking, craft and photography.

Students performed well at various sporting events during the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- Athletics: Mt St Patrick was the champion school at the Tweed Athletic Carnival, with four of the age champions coming from Mt St Patrick.16 students including
three relay teams competed in the Diocesan Athletics Carnival, with the Senior Girls Relay team breaking the Diocesan record.

- Mt St Patrick Football: the Mt St Patrick Football Team were the Tweed Zone champions and joint winners of the Diocesan Paul Wilson Memorial Trophy.
- Polding Representatives: nine students represented Polding at the PSSA events in hockey, football, athletics, and cross country.
- Cross Country: Mt St Patrick was placed 3rd overall in the Zone Cross Country Carnival.
- Team Participation: participation in community sporting events by Mt St Patrick students is enthusiastic and encouraging. The Netball Gala Day, Stage 2 Hockey Gala Day, Fitzpatrick Shield in hockey and the Group 18 Junior Rugby League competition are some of the competitions that Mt St Patrick participated in.

There were many people who assisted in the school’s quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. Mt St Patrick Primary is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people.

Brian Laybutt
Principal

A Parent Message

Parents are invited and encouraged to attend all sporting events, assemblies or any other school functions that take place.

During 2011 the Parent Forum had four meetings. In these meetings the parents, along with the school staff decided where our funds would be best used to help our children. Money was allocated to purchase new reading materials and to assist with school landscaping. There was an introduction of boys’ long pants that are now an optional addition to the school uniform.

The Parent Forum delegated to each class an event that would be held during the year. The parent representatives of that class would then organise that event and recruit other parents of that class to help. These events included a bush dance for which parents organised the barbecue. Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls were run by parents; gifts were ordered, wrapped and sold at the stalls by parents.

Two major fundraisers were held. The first was a Skill-a-Thon. The students gained sponsorship to complete a series of fun events at school. The second was a monster raffle.

Two parents represent Mt St Patrick Primary at the Parent Assembly which gives the school access to different speakers. Their topics range from cyber-bullying to parenting in the 21st Century, feeding a fussy eater to the Spiritual well-being of our children.

Mt St Patrick Primary promotes the understanding that teaching our children is the joint effort of parents and teachers. The school has an “open door” policy so that there is a strong relationship between parents and teachers to ensure the best educational experience for each child.

Sarah Guinea
This Catholic School

Mt St Patrick Primary is located in Murwillumbah and is part of the Sacred Heart Parish which serves the communities of Murwillumbah, South Murwillumbah, Uki and Burringbar. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of the Tweed Shire which takes in the whole of the Tweed Valley and Tweed Coast.

Last year the school celebrated 108 years of Catholic education.

The Parish Priest Fr. David Gilbey is involved in the life of the school.

Mt St Patrick Primary is a Parish School with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through such activities such as:

- involvement in the Parish Christmas Tableau;
- preparation for and involvement in Friday Parish masses;
- preparation of children for the sacraments;
- classes attending reconciliation every second term;
- Mini-Vinnies- fundraisers, rosary bead making and other such initiatives

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeates school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The implementation of the Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines supports the school’s prayer life. The purposes of this parish school are centred on Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.

Mt St Patrick Primary School caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTAL 2011</th>
<th>TOTAL 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are currently 339 students enrolled in 13 classes.

**School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

In 2010 Mathematics and Spelling were key focus areas.

In Mathematics students from Years 3 through to 6 actively participated in the interactive Mathletics program. In addition to this students in Years 5 & 6 also participated in the Maths Olympiad program. Maths Olympiad allows students the opportunity to develop problem solving skills by attempting to answer a series of questions presented to them throughout the year. In 2011 the school trialled ‘iMaths’. This is also an interactive mathematics program that poses real life problems and asks students to implement concepts and skills learnt in an attempt to solve the problem presented. It is envisaged that ‘iMaths’ will be continued into 2012. In addition to this the school continues to run enrichment Mathematics classes for students in Years 3 through to 6. For those students experiencing difficulty in Mathematics the QuickSmart program is operating.

All staff participated in a Professional Development Day that focused on Spelling. As a result a more individualised approach to student spelling has been adopted.

In Early Stage 1, with the assistance from Southern Cross University, the school was able to successfully implement a highly effective Pre-School to Kindergarten orientation program. In addition to this Mt St Patrick Primary School piloted the Best Start program, which is a diagnostic screening tool administered to all Kindergarten students.
Student Performance in National Testing Programs

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 34 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 48 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there were six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. In Year 3, students who achieved Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieved at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At Mt St Patrick Primary, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Education Office-led information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of Mt St Patrick Primary students in each band compared to the state percentage.
## Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BAND</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number, Patterns and Algebra</strong></td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</strong></td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that students have performed extremely well in 2011. As can be seen from the table the percentages of students in the top three bands in numeracy and literacy are pleasing compared to State figures. A number of initiatives have impacted on these results including the implementation of a range of teaching strategies to improve student understanding of literacy and numeracy. Year 5 student performance in the top three bands in Reading are higher than the State as a result of the implementation various reading strategies.

NAPLAN results will be further analysed to inform and guide the direction for future improvements. The high percentage of students achieving minimum standards, compared to State figures, is testament to the focus on curriculum differentiation strategies developed and implemented over recent years.
Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole-staff development day professional learning activities in 2011 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Anne Dawson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Schools, school infrastructure.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brian Laybutt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling K - 6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Angela Ehmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- Best Start – Kindergarten Teachers attended training days;
- Differentiating Curriculum – Assistant Principal attended a two day conference in Brisbane;
- Technology Conference – Curriculum coordinator attended a three day conference in Sydney;
- New Scheme Teacher and Mentor Workshop;
- Inter School visits focusing on Open Classrooms;
- NAPLAN Data Analysis workshops;
QuickSmart training;
- Persuasive Writing workshop

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $4,124.56 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CEO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average teacher attendance figure is 95.53%. This figure is provided to the school by the CEO.

During the year Mrs Merilyn Frost resigned her position after many years of service to the school.

**Student Attendance**

School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2011 was 92%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School Policies**

School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2011 the following policies were reviewed, updated or newly created:
- Within the school-based English policy the “spelling” component was revised.
- Due to the completion of the new buildings a number of OH&S policies needed to be revised. These included Evacuation, Lock Down and Critical Incident Policies.
- Parent and Staff Handbooks also needed to be adjusted in light of the new buildings.
- A review of the Integrated Teaching Units was carried out.

Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at Mt St Patrick Primary requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

Pastoral care is love in action and as such, underpins the school's policies and curriculum statements, procedures and organizational structures. It brings the school’s vision to life in a practical and tangible manner. Other additional pastoral care programs that have been implemented in our school include the Virtues program and the Season for Growth program (a grief and loss program).

The school has a teacher employed on a part-time basis to cater for the general well – being of the students as well as a staff member employed through the School Chaplaincy program who works within a pastoral and student support framework. Mt St Patrick School, Murwillumbah provides a safe educational environment for students and staff. Student safety is aided by having all teachers trained in the protocols and programs concerning the Child Protection legislation. This includes defining school regulations and rules as well as having in place various policies such as the Anti-bullying policy.

Occupational Health and Safety is constantly being reviewed in order to provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff. Detailed duty rosters and aspects pertaining to duty and care of students are outlined in Staff and Parent Handbooks. At each Staff meeting OH&S is raised as an agenda item and the school has a comprehensive policy that is available from the office.
Discipline Policy

At Mt St Patrick Primary when we speak of discipline, we are referring to the means of bringing the children to practise self-control. We are aiming to lead the children to regulate their conduct according to Christian ideals, values and standards. While we strive to use a positive approach to discipline by rewarding good behaviour and effort, the school also has a program of disciplinary action which takes into account the nature and severity of transgressions of basic school rules, is sequential, is co-ordinated across the school and is consistently applied to boys and girls. The Discipline Policy is accessible on the school website. It is also discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the Discipline Policy are regularly included in school newsletters.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. The policy is available at the front office or from the school’s website.

School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five year Strategic Plan. 2011 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school's main goals and priorities were to:

- continue to monitor student performance in Literacy & Numeracy;
- ensure equitable distribution of computer hardware among all K-6 classes and review resources;
- ensure a management program is in place assist the school adjust to continued IT changes and developments;
- promote a common pedagogy with respect to “How students best learn” based on current research and best practice;
- review diagnostic testing procedures and tracking format;
- develop school-based assessment criteria;
- familiarise staff with and implement the Australian Curriculum;
- review parental participation and the effectiveness of existing structures e.g. family picnic days, School Open Day, parent reps, welcoming new families etc;
- continue to explore and formalise an effective transition program from Pre – school to Kindergarten;
- develop clear procedures around the induction of new students / families;
- ensure that stage-based Masses are linked to RE units;
- review IT Plan;
- implement a School Maintenance Plan;
- review the buildings and facilities available in relation to establishment.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility
The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- student participation in various community events e.g. ANZAC Day march, Banana Festival, Murwillumbah Show;
- implementation of a Virtues program
- daily prayer and regular liturgical celebrations;
- Pastoral Support Teacher employed within the school;
- Additional Needs Teacher employed within the school;
- Mission and Values teacher employed within the school;
- class rules negotiated each term and clearly displayed in all classrooms;
- Anti – Bulling policy
- clear step by step discipline policy;
- extracts from discipline policy periodically placed in the newsletter;
- SEASONS program used within the school;
- Mini-Vinnies activities;
- Good Sport Awards presented at Assembly;
- fundraising to support Mission Australia & Caritas;
- Social Skills program.

**Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction**

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:

- A parent survey was issued to all the families of new students to the school. These families included those with Kindergarten students as well as 21 new families to the school from Year 1 through to Year 6. The survey asked parents to comment on the transition process, quality of education, effectiveness of school / home communication and overall satisfaction with the school to date. The results of the survey were made available to the parents at a Parent Forum meeting.
- Student Representative Council (SRC) meets on a weekly basis to discuss issues and initiatives relating to the school.
- The Parish School Forum meetings provide opportunities for parental feedback. These termly meetings allow any parental issues to be addressed at a school level. Overall feedback and impressions of the school during the year were of a positive nature.
- School Leadership Team members meet frequently with class teachers to discuss teaching programs, classroom management and the implementation of new
programs / initiatives. This allows teachers the opportunity to provide feedback and make comment regarding school direction.

Financial Information
Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Education Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Education Office are audited annually.

The following graphs represent the income and expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2011 as aggregated from the annual report to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2011. Additional financial information is available on the MYSchool website.

2011 INCOME - Mount St Patrick Primary School - MURWILLUMBAH
2011 EXPENSE - Mount St Patrick Primary School - MURWILLUMBAH

Salary & Related Expenditure 73%

Other Expenditure 15%

Capital Expenditure 12%